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DE RUEHJA #0205 0370845
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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1404
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS COLL
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI 0943
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3579
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 3475
RUEHSM/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 2103
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000205

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/MTS, INR/EAP, PRM/ANE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [SOCI](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: ROHINGYA IN EAST ACEH RECOVERING FROM ORDEAL

REF JAKARTA 0039

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Consulate Medan staff brought sports equipment in a February 5 visit to the East Aceh site camp of the 198 Rohingya that were rescued off of the coast of Aceh on February 3. The Rohingya seemed to be recovering from their ordeal well thanks to efforts by local officials, the Indonesian Red Cross, and the generosity of the local community. Some 22 Rohingya remain hospitalized for a variety of reasons related to their ordeal or abuse received prior. The Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs (Deplu) arrived on February 4 to conduct interviews of the Rohingya at the East Aceh site. UNHCR has been promised access to this group in the near future. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Consulate Medan FSN staff traveled to Idie Rayeuk sub-district in East Aceh District on February 5 to meet with local officials, donate sports equipment for use by the Rohingya, and observe conditions at the camp and local hospital where the Rohingya were staying. Medan staff met local official M. Amin and handed over sports equipment for the Rohingya at the sub-district office in a private meeting. The local officials were very appreciative of the equipment since the Rohingya population had no recreational equipment to keep them occupied.

¶3. (U) Locals in East Aceh have been generous in both donations and in-kind contributions of clothing and other basic necessities for the Rohingya. Medan staff also witnessed one local religious leader (ulama) who, according to M. Amin, could speak Urdu and was communicating with the Rohingya. Tents provided by local government and the Ministry of Social Welfare (Depsos) were adequate. Also assisting were local boy scouts and young members of the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI).

¶4. (U) The local government, local Social Affairs office, and citizens have combined their efforts to provide rice for the Rohingya. PMI coordination of the relief activities seemed well-established but coordination among local agencies was less well organized.

¶5. (SBU) The average age of the all-male Rohingya group was estimated at around 40 years old, while about 15 of the group were teenagers and 3 appeared to be under 10 years old. Some 22 of the Rohingya were still hospitalized as of February 5 at the local general hospital with various ailments. Most of the health issues were digestive problems, but some suffered from bruises and injuries caused by beating and caning (claimed by the Rohingya to have been received at the hands of Thai security forces before they left Thailand).

¶6. (U) Local radio in Aceh and North Sumatra broadcast a statement

on the morning of February 5 by a spokesperson for the Indonesian Foreign Ministry hesitating to draw any early conclusions on the reasons of the departure of the Rohingya from their homeland and providing no comment on next steps by the Indonesian government in the case.

¶7. (SBU) Access control to the Rohingya was put in place on February 5 by Deplu officials. These officials cordoned off the area and limited public and media access while conducting their interviews of the Rohingya. One military officer from the Aceh Iskandar Muda Military Command was observed at the camp along with 5 local police tasked to secure the area. All Rohingya were given badges with their name and origin information. At the same time, all guests were required to report to Deplu staff before being given permission to enter the camp.

¶8. (U) Deplu has promised UNHCR access in the near future, at which time a thorough assessment with interpreters will be possible. In the meantime, the community and the GOI are taking very good care of the boat people.

HUME